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COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
First session
29 March-8 April 1993
Item 2 of the provisional agenda

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

Provisional agenda

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3. Permanent sovereignty over mineral and water resources.

4. New techniques, including remote sensing, for identifying, exploring for and assessing mineral and water resources.

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7. Matters arising from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in the field of water resources.

8. Issues concerning the sustainable development and use of water resources.

9. Cross-sectoral priority programmes for coordinated action by the United Nations system in the area of water resources:

   (a) Information management;

   (b) Capacity-building for water resources management.

10. Flow of financial resources and transfer of technology to develop the mineral resources of developing countries.

11. Issues concerning the International Round Table on Mining and Environment, held in Berlin in 1991, and implications of environmental protection and conservation policies and strategies in the mineral sector.

12. Small-scale mining activities in developing countries and national legislation regarding enterprises in this area.

13. Priority programmes for coordinated action by the United Nations system in the area of mineral resources:

    (a) Information management;

    (b) Capacity-building for mineral sector management.

14. Provisional agenda for the second session of the Committee.

15. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its first session.

Annotations

1. Election of officers

In accordance with rule 26 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council, the Committee, as a subsidiary body of the Council, shall elect its officers. The Committee may wish to continue the practice of the former intergovernmental Committee on Natural Resources and elect five officers, namely a Chairman, three Vice-Chairmen and a Rapporteur.

2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

The provisional agenda is based on the revised terms of reference of the new Committee on Natural Resources and takes into account the changes made by the General Assembly in resolution 46/235 and recent developments of particular significance.

In decision 1992/218 of 30 April 1992 on the establishment of new subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council, the Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its substantive session of 1992, recommendations for the programme of work of the Committee on Natural Resources.

In resolution 1992/62 of 31 July 1992, the Council approved the recommendations related to the Committee's programme of work, as contained in the note by the Secretary-General (E/1992/76).

The provisional agenda is fully in consonance with Council resolution 1992/62. It takes into account the mandates arising from the twelfth session of the former Committee on Natural Resources. In addition, it proposes some new initiatives in order to provide the Committee with the material it needs to fulfil its mandate.

The proposed organizational arrangements for the work of the Committee, as approved by the Economic and Social Council in resolution 1992/62, are set out below.

In addition to the items concerning the election of officers and adoption of the agenda (items 1 and 2), issues related to permanent sovereignty, new techniques, including remote sensing, and disaster prevention and mitigation (items 3, 4 and 5) would be dealt with in plenary meeting as they are relevant to both mineral and water resources. Following the discussion of these items, the Committee would break up into two working groups: the Working Group on Water Resources (to discuss items 6 to 9) and the Working Group on Mineral Resources (to discuss items 10 to 13). Items 14 and 15 would be considered in plenary meeting.

3. Permanent sovereignty over mineral and water resources

Since the adoption by the General Assembly of resolutions 523 (VI) of 12 January 1952, 1803 (XVII) of 14 December 1962 and 3201 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974, the Economic and Social Council and the Committee on Natural Resources have monitored developments in the exercise of permanent sovereignty over natural resources.

In resolution 1991/88, the Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Committee on Natural Resources at its thirteenth session a concise, updated report on permanent sovereignty over natural resources.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on permanent sovereignty over mineral and water resources (E/C.7/1993/2)

4. New techniques, including remote sensing, for identifying, exploring for and assessing mineral and water resources

In resolution 1991/89, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to strengthen the capability of the developing countries in the application of remote-sensing techniques for the identification and subsequent exploration, exploitation and development of natural resources through workshops, seminars and training courses to be organized at the regional or country level in developing countries. The Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Committee at its thirteenth session a report on the implementation of the resolution.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on efforts to strengthen the capability of developing countries in the application of remote-sensing techniques to mineral and water resources (E/C.7/1993/3)

5. Disaster prevention and mitigation in developing and utilizing mineral and water resources

In decision 1991/306 the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to continue to coordinate, through existing mechanisms, the activities being undertaken by the organs, organizations and programmes of the United Nations system as they relate to disaster prevention and mitigation in developing and utilizing natural resources, and to make an updated oral report thereon to the Committee on Natural Resources at its thirteenth session. The Committee will hear an oral report.

6. Activities of the United Nations system in the field of water resources

In resolution 1991/85, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Committee on Natural Resources at its thirteenth session, for consideration and follow-up, an analytical report on the progress made in the implementation of the Mar del Plata Action Plan containing recommendations for future action at the national and international levels and a summary of meetings, seminars and conferences on water held during the biennium 1991-1992 (para. 9). The Council also requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Committee a compendium of legislative mandates relevant to water resources adopted by the entities of the United Nations system concerned (para. 10). The report before the Committee responds to these requests as they relate to the summary of meetings, seminars and conferences and the mandates of organizations. Implementation of the Mar del Plata Action Plan is dealt with under item 8.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General containing an overview of activities of the organizations of the United Nations system in the field of water resources in the context of their basic mandates, and a summary of meetings, seminars and conferences on water held during the biennium 1991-1992 (E/C.7/1993/4)

7. Matters arising from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in the field of water resources

In resolution 1991/90, the Economic and Social Council, requested the Secretary-General to prepare a compilation of the relevant decisions emanating from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in the area of natural resources for priority consideration by the Committee on Natural Resources at its thirteenth session.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on the provisions of Agenda 21 relevant to the area of water resources (E/C.7/1993/5)

8. Issues concerning the sustainable development and use of water resources

The report before the Committee has been prepared in response to paragraph 9 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1991/85. It deals with

development issues that are at the basis of problems related to the implementation of the Mar del Plata Action Plan in the 1990s.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on human development issues and water resources development in the 1990s (E/C.7/1993/6).

9. Cross-sectoral priority programmes for coordinated action by the United Nations system in the area of water resources

(a) Information management

(b) Capacity-building for water resources management

This is a new item, not directly derived from the work of previous sessions but well within the terms of reference of the new Committee. Issues requiring a coordinated approach by the organizations of the United Nations system will be considered in order to obtain the necessary guidance for further action.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General containing proposals for system-wide action on integrated monitoring of key indicators of the state of the world's freshwaters, and a strategic approach to information collection, processing and dissemination in the United Nations system of organizations (E/C.7/1993/7)

Report of the Secretary-General containing proposals for system-wide action on capacity-building for water resources management (E/C.7/1993/8)

10. Flow of financial resources and transfer of technology to develop the mineral resources of developing countries

In resolution 1991/87, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Committee on Natural Resources at its thirteenth session a report on ways and means of facilitating the flow of financial resources and transfer of technology to the developing countries to enable them to optimize the exploration and development of their mineral sectors (para. 2). It also requested the Secretary-General to include in that report information on existing programmes - governmental, intergovernmental and, to the extent possible, private - as well as proposals for investment possibilities in developing countries to support the efforts of developing countries in securing the investments they required for the development of their mineral resources (para. 3). The Council further requested the Secretary-General to include in that report the conclusions and recommendations of meetings and seminars related to mineral resources, in particular the Conference on Mining and Environment, held in Berlin in June 1991 (see item 11) and information on the feasibility of establishing geological information systems in developing countries to assist in the development of mineral resources, for consideration and follow-up action by the Committee at its thirteenth session (para. 4).

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on ways and means of facilitating the flow of financial resources and transfer of technology to develop the mineral resources of developing countries (E/C.7/1993/9)

11. Issues concerning the Round Table on Mining and Environment, held in Berlin in 1991, and implications of environmental protection and conservation policies and strategies in the mineral sector

The report before the Committee has been prepared in response to paragraph 4 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1991/87 as it relates to the International Round Table on Mining and Environment, held in Berlin in 1991. The report also responds to Council resolution 1991/90, in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to prepare a compilation of the relevant decisions emanating from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in the area of natural resources for priority consideration by the Committee at its thirteenth session.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on the conclusions and recommendations of the International Round Table on Mining and Environment and of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (E/C.7/1993/10)

12. Small-scale mining activities in developing countries and national legislation regarding enterprises in this area

In resolution 1991/87, the Economic and Social Council, requested the Secretary-General to continue to report to the Committee on recent positive achievements in small-scale mining activities in developing countries and national legislation regarding the activities of enterprises in this area, as well as on progress made in the establishment of demonstration and training projects for the transfer of small-scale mining technology and methods and on national approaches and international cooperation for maximizing the benefits of small-scale mining for economic and social development in developing countries; the Council stressed that the report should include information on the economic contribution of women in small-scale mining.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on recent achievements in small-scale mining activities in developing countries (E/C.7/1993/11)

13. Priority programmes for coordinated action by the United Nations system in the area of mineral resources

(a) Information management

(b) Capacity-building for mineral sector management

This is a new agenda item not directly derived from the work of previous sessions, but well within the terms of reference of the new Committee on

Natural Resources. The objective is to seek guidelines for coordinating system-wide activities for the purpose of integrating them into future activities.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General containing a proposal for a mechanism to monitor and gather information on a regular basis on issues concerning the flow of investment in the mineral sector of developing countries and capacity-building in investment promotion (E/C.7/1993/12)

14. Provisional agenda for the second session of the Committee

In view of the revised terms of reference of the new Committee on Natural Resources and in the light of the assumption that the new Committee may wish to adopt innovative approaches, the draft provisional agenda will not be prepared in advance of the session. It will be drafted on the basis of the Committee's deliberations and recommendations.

15. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its first session

The Committee will adopt its report to the Economic and Social Council.